



Minutes Mayor's Commission on Disability Concerns December 7, 2015

Minutes of the MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY CONCERNS meeting held on Monday, December 7, 2015, 6:30p.m. at the Tempe Public Library, 3500 S. Rural Road, Board Room, Tempe, Arizona 85282.

MEMBERS Present:

Chair Irene Mochel
Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz
Ben Campbell
Rachel Phillips
Diane Moran (via Phone)
Jeff Oats
Kim W. Fisher

MEMBERS Absent:

Tom Ringhofer

Guests:

Heidi Braswell

Diversity Staff Present:

Michele Stokes, ADA Compliance Specialist

Chair Irene Mochel called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Public Appearances

None

Agenda Item 1 - Consideration of Minutes: MCDC – November 2, 2015 Minutes

The November 2, 2015 CDC Minutes were APPROVED, with minor corrections.

Motion: **Commissioner Jeff Oats.**

Second: **Commissioner Ben Campbell.** Motion carried.

Agenda Item 2 – Employment in Tempe – Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz

Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz discussed how nationwide there has been a dismal job of hiring people with disabilities, even though the general employment rate has been rising.

Staff prepared a report on current Census data regarding employment. Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz reiterated: The 2000 Census information that was used in the 2004 ADA Task Force report provided information in the past about disability employment. Current data cannot be compared to that 2000 Census data as the basis for measurement are not consistent.

Commissioner Rachel Phillips asked if the percentage of people with disabilities was known. The draft document, "City of Tempe 2015 Disability Status Report – Employment" indicated that in Tempe the employment rate of people with disabilities who are employed is about 3.64 percent. This percentage is very low.

There are some employers who are good at hiring, training and retaining employees with disabilities such as Fry's and Safeway food stores. In the Arizona Food Market Association magazine they have highlighted disability hiring. Safeway has a facility where they specifically train employees with disabilities.

Commissioner Diane Moran brought up that employers cannot bring up disability because of HIPPA and other laws. Because of ADA and other confidentiality laws, employers cannot ask about disabilities even if they are proactively hiring, and people with disabilities don't want to self-disclose due to stigma.

Commissioner Kim Fisher discussed a situation where discrimination testing was done using employers and resumes' that were the same but that one was presented by a person with a disability and one without. There was clear discrimination, fighting disability discrimination it has to be a priority.

Discussion was held on how to go about collecting data to help create strategies that will help, bringing to the table organizations that provide this information might be helpful. Discussion was held on providing education or employment fair or the like to facilitate employment in Tempe.

Chair Irene Mochel said we need to dispel myths and stereotypes about hiring people with disabilities. Also we need to bring up to employers information about accommodations, transportation flexibility for people who use buses or Dial-a-Ride. Dial-a-Ride is not reliable to get people to work on time. It's difficult to rely on the transportation system when you have to be at work at a specific time. You end up leaving very early to facilitate getting to work on time.

Chair Irene Mochel said it takes concessions on both the employer and the employee as well to make it work.

Commissioner Diane Moran said that other employees should be allowed to assist if they want but employers don't want them to for liability reasons.

The ADA Title 1 has an accommodation process which we should educate ourselves on, so we can speak to it. We need to educate ourselves first. The process of accommodation is very clear in the ADA and every employer with over 50 employees is required to have it in place and its EEOC's job to hold them accountable.

We want to continue discussing this in future meetings – next month's agenda also. We will see if we can get someone from Arizona Center for Disability Law or EEOC, or an employment association to present. We want to include this in the Tempe Presents series also.

Discussion was held on various scenarios of people who have had problems getting in the door and we should train people with disabilities on how to present their disabilities in a professional manner.

Agenda Item 3 – Promoting Toilet Room Access – Commissioner Tom Ringhofer

This item deferred until the next meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – White Cane Day Follow up – Chair Irene Mochel

Additional survey responses were received and presented to the commissioners. Basically vendors don't want the event on Saturday and next year October 15th is on a Saturday.

Discussion was held on whether to have the "Tempe Presents:" series reflect a disability type such as intellectual disability or cover a topic, such as Employment. The Commission decided that the next event in October 2016 will be an employment related event in light of the need to address employment. Discussion will be continued next month to determine details for the October 2016 Tempe Presents event based on employment. Also October is National Disability Employment Month. Discussion was held on ideas, including contacting the Chamber of Commerce; providing a venue to facilitate training sessions on ADA accommodations; or a job fair. Educating employers and people with disabilities would be of benefit.

Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz discussed what can be done to stimulate discussions on hiring people with disabilities. The more that is brought up the more employers buy into hiring not just people with one specific disability but with all disabilities. We need to bring in the Chamber of Commerce from the beginning to help as well as disability and job development agencies, as well. Chair Irene Mochel said that education and training is needed.

Staff will identify agencies that may be doing something similar to bring forward, such as Workforce Connection which is county, Phoenix has similar, and bring a list of agencies for next month.

Discussion was held on the type of event to hold, including a round table to facilitate deeper discussions.

Agenda Item 5 – 2016 Mayor's Disability Awards Planning – Chair Irene Mochel

Materials were provided by staff for editing: Sponsor packet and Nomination form. The Committee will be meeting next Monday, in Room B, on the lower level on December 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners need to approach people they know for sponsorship. The sponsorship package will be on-line, and you can refer them to the website after January, once the document is complete. You can also hand them the document, as well. Current status of planning for the 2016 Mayor's Disability Awards:

- The Mayor has been confirmed as the presenter of the awards.
- The location will be the Tempe Center for the Arts (TCA) on April 12, 2016, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The contract has been signed by the Diversity office and a deposit provided through last year's fund raising efforts.
- The ramp and stage will be requested by TCA from the Pyle Center. This is the same ramp and stage used in prior years. We will provide the "bags" for edge protection. There will be a ramp only, no steps.
- The grant for the Tempe Diablo scholarships was applied for, and notification of award was received earlier in the year. The grant covers the student scholarships, up to \$3,000 with no strings attached; and up to \$2,000 for disability accommodations, such as ASL interpreters, Captioning, etc. This past year they gave us more than we asked for, which will cover the accommodations. This was much appreciated!

Marketing will be online and a save the date card will be mailed out to the Diversity mailing list. The best strategy that seems to work though is to tell people you know who care about the things that you care about. Discussion was held on the history of the event and its evolution to the event from TCA to the City, and from solely from the Workbridge program to all high school students. The funding is a

big part of its success. It would not have happened without the Tempe Diablos support and the support of the various sponsors who have contributed over the year.

Next month, a budget will be provided. Discussion was held on whether there are areas where costs can be minimized, such as with the food.

The planning meetings will be scheduled for the 2nd Monday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. open to the public and commissioners who wish to participate.

Agenda Item 5 –Employment in Tempe – Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz

Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz requested information on comparable census data to determine disability resident and employment data in Tempe, if possible, for discussion for next month's meeting in order to compare how we are doing in hiring people with disabilities in Tempe. The 2004 ADA Task Force Report had this information which we can use to compare with 2015 data.

Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz also indicated that we should look into any internship opportunities for people with disabilities in the City, asking whether there was an inventory of such. Also a search of job development agencies serving Tempe should be completed.

Agenda Item 6 – 2016 Goals and Calendar – Chair Irene Mochel

Goals that were agreed upon in the July 2015 minutes (Page 3) were provided. The top priorities in July were White Cane Day which was completed. The Disability Awards is being scheduled. The ADA Transition Plan is in progress and the most current information is that they are working on the GIS data and hope to have refinements to publicize at the Disability Awards. The Access Tempe status is in process and it should be available to showcase at the Disability Awards.

The priorities that were identified as high priorities are getting done! A lot has been accomplished this past year. The Commission wants to give council an update on goals accomplished in the annual report or a letter. There are several ways that the information can be presented to the Council.

Vice Chair Paul Bennewitz asked if it would be good to go to a meeting that happens before a Work Session prior to a City Council meeting so that questions can be asked and answered, to bring these accomplishments to light. This could segue into the Tempe Presents: Employment event.

Commissioner Rachel Phillips said there has been a lot done in the past five months.

Agenda Item 7 - Announcements

A question was raised on whether an employer could mandate an age to end working. An individual thought it had something to do with disability laws. Staff confirmed that there is no such stipulation in the law or ADA; it might be a company policy, a poor one, but not a legal requirement.

Commissioner Kim Fisher brought up that there is a lot of information on making technology accessible to people with intellectual disabilities and she would be happy to share the information. This will be added to a future agenda, in February.

Motion to adjourn: **Commissioner Jeff Oats**

Second: **Commissioner Ben Campbell.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Prepared by: Michele Stokes

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Director